

Syria frees jailed Palestinians

TUNIS (R) — Syria said Tuesday it had freed all Palestinians in its jails, and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) sources in Tunis said most were long-detained supporters of PLO leader Yasser Arafat. Announcing the release in Damascus, a Syrian official did not say how many Palestinians had been freed or how long they had been held. "Concerned Syrian authorities today released all Palestinians detained. Those released had committed offences in a previous period which required their detention," the official said. PLO sources said there were 4,000 to 5,000 Palestinians in Syrian prisons and most had been held since relations between Mr. Arafat and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad soured in 1983. The question of their release had been a stumbling block in mediation efforts, mainly by Algeria, the sources said.

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Clark in Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clark, the most senior Canadian official to visit Iran since the 1979 Islamic revolution, discussed the aftermath of the Gulf war with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati Tuesday. Mr. Velayati reiterated Iran's policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of Iraq and said its future should be determined by its people alone, Tehran Radio reported. Mr. Clark said regional countries needed to trust each other more to guarantee their security.

Hogg begins visit to Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg arrived in Damascus Tuesday for talks on Middle East peace and Western hostages held in Lebanon. He is the first British minister to visit since relations were restored in November after a four-year break. "We want to stress our willingness to establish good relations with the Syrian government," Mr. Hogg told reporters.

U.S. cancels travel advisory

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department has cancelled a seven-week-old notice warning Americans travelling anywhere in the world of the potential for Gulf-related attacks. The initial advisory had been issued as the allies started the air war against Iraqi forces. "With the cessation of hostilities in the 'Persian' Gulf, the worldwide-Persian Gulf advisory of Jan. 16, 1991, has been cancelled," a department statement said. At the same time, it warned that tensions still remain in portions of the Middle East, Africa and South Asia even though a ceasefire is in place in the Gulf.

Schwarzkopf visits Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — U.S. General H. Norman Schwarzkopf arrived in Kuwait City Tuesday and took sand from the free beaches of Kuwait in the first visit of the commanding general of the allied forces to the oil-rich emirate. He filled a small bottle with sand from Kuwait beach. Gen. Schwarzkopf flew into Kuwait in his U.S. army C-21 transport plane, met with Kuwait's prime minister and crown prince, Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Al Sabah, and U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Edward Gnehm. "As far as I'm concerned, it's over," the general said, referring to the war.

Egypt, Iran to reopen interest sections

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt and Iran will reopen interest sections next week in a first step towards resuming diplomatic relations severed almost 12 years ago. A Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday. The official said Ahmad Namik, who holds the rank of ambassador, will head Egypt's interest section at the French embassy in Tehran next week. Iran also will send a representative whose office will be attached to the Swiss embassy in Cairo.

Algerians do not plan to boycott Haj

RIYADH (AP) — Algeria's ambassador to Saudi Arabia has said his country will not boycott this year's Haj, the official Saudi Press Agency reported Tuesday. "The press reports that said Algeria might boycott the coming Haj season are not true," Abdul Qadir Ben Saleh said after talks late Monday with Saudi Minister of Pilgrimage and Endowments Abdul Wahab Abdul Wasie.

Mubarak, Fernandez Ordonez meet

CAIRO (AP) — Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez met President Hosni Mubarak Tuesday and said afterwards that they discussed bilateral relations and the post-war situation in the Gulf region. The Spanish official was also quoted by the state-run Middle East News Agency as saying that Mr. Mubarak stressed the importance of maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Karbala, Najaf under firm Iraqi army control

Saddam chairs top-level meeting

Combined agency dispatches

claimed that the rebels had cut the highway between Baghdad and Kirkuk.

Sources at a meeting in Beirut of 325 Iraqi opposition leaders from 23 factions conceded that Iraqi troops had retaken Karbala and Dhi Qar provinces in southern Iraq.

"Several towns change hands repeatedly. One day we control them and the other day the army controls them. Then we attack them again. There is still some fighting in Najaf and Karbala, but most of them are controlled by the army," said one source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Iraqi newspaper Al Thawra reported Tuesday that First Deputy Prime Minister Tahsin Yassin Ramadan, a Revolutionary Command Council member, was among four high-ranking government officials who visited four southern provinces Monday.

He is the brother of Interior Minister Ali Hassan Al Majid, appointed by President Saddam a week ago.

The opposition leaders meanwhile tried to bridge their differences over the strategy of their rebellion and the future of Iraq if they can topple President Saddam.

A major theme of the conference was the need for better coordination among the rebel

But the newspaper story mentioning Mr. Ramadan appeared designed to lay to rest claims that he had been killed, as well as indicate that the government had retaken control in Babil, Maisan and Dhi Qar provinces in southern Iraq.

The government's recapture of Najaf and Karbala was a propaganda blow to the rebels.

In a separate report, Radio Baghdad said President Saddam met Military Industrialisation Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan who reported to the Iraqi leader on a visit he made to Karbala.

Mr. Hassan, according to Iraqi exiles, has been a constant companion of President Saddam since the Gulf crisis erupted last August with Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.

Bayan Jaber of the Shi'ite Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq claimed Monday in Damascus that Mr. Ramadan was killed by President Saddam's bodyguards when he shot the Iraqi leader in the right hand in an assassination attempt.

The Iraqi run media has made no direct reference to the inscription.

(Continued on page 5)

Two Israeli soldiers killed after struck by Palestinian car

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A Palestinian driver killed two Israeli soldiers when his car struck an army foot patrol in the occupied Gaza Strip, the army said Tuesday. It said investigators were examining whether it was intentional or an accident.

The incident, in which two other soldiers also were injured, occurred late Monday afternoon two hours after the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. But the army delayed publication apparently over difficulties in finding relatives to notify them.

The accident occurred in Beit Hanoun, in northern Gaza, as soldiers were in patrol, the army said. An automobile bearing local license plates struck them, and the driver, a Palestinian, was shot and wounded as he sped away, it added.

One soldier died on the spot and a second died while he was being taken to hospital, the army said. It said a third was injured

moderately and another lightly. The driver was later tracked down at his home in nearby Gaza City's Sejaiyah quarter, the army said.

From preliminary investigations it is unclear whether it was an accident or an intentional hit," the statement added.

Israel Radio said the automobile, veered across the road and struck the soldiers as they walked in the opposite direction.

The driver reportedly was treated at a local hospital before returning home.

Also in Gaza, soldiers sealed up the home of Mohammad Mustafa Abu Jalla, a Palestinian from Jabaliya refugee camp who was shot in the leg and arrested after stabbing four women to death in Jerusalem Sunday.

A policeman testified that Abu Jalla threatened to kill more Jews during questioning, including his interrogator, Itim said. It added that Abu Jalla shouted obscenities against Mr. Baker in English to reporters as he was taken from the court.

He told police earlier that Israeli soldiers had killed his cousin during clashes in the occupied Gaza Strip two years ago.

On Monday, journalists were allowed to photograph him leaving police headquarters in a blood-soaked hospital gown with a bandaged arm and a black eye.

The house was sealed with cement blocks. The army has frequently sealed or demolished homes of Palestinians suspected of anti-Israeli activities.

Police said Abu Jalla told them

he carried out the killings as a "message to Baker."

A court extended Abu Jalla's detention for 15 days while the incidents are investigated.

Abu Jalla, his hands and feet shackled, told the court, "I was taking revenge for the death of my cousin who was shot by soldiers two years ago," the Itim news agency said.

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More than 10,000 Kuwaitis trying to leave their country

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Thousands of Kuwaitis mobbed a soccer stadium Tuesday as they applied to leave Kuwait, saying the government has failed to provide food, water and electricity.

So far, more than 10,000 people have requested permission to leave the country temporarily, two weeks after it was freed from Iraqi occupation, an official at the Ministry of Interior said.

"The government is simply incompetent, unqualified, unpopular and unwanted," said Abdul Al Fadly, one of the estimated 2,000 applicants that descended on the Kadima soccer stadium Tuesday morning.

"The streets are full of guns and ammunition," he said. "If people come back angry we will have big problems."

The crowd at the soccer stadium appeared to reflect a general dissatisfaction among many Kuwaitis with the government's apparent failure to provide essentials to the people who suffered through the seven-month Iraqi occupation.

The government promised electricity would be restored more than one week ago but until now it has not done so. Water has also been promised but taps have yet to be turned back on. Tonnes of food has rotted because the government did not supply forklifts to unload container trucks.

"We are living in the dark ages now," said Tariq Ben Ghairi, a 28-year-old insurance salesman. "When the Iraqis were here it was much more organised than it is now."

Mr. Ben Ghairi, who'd been at the stadium for a total of 18 hours over three days, stood in one of five lines that snaked out from the stadium. Kuwaitis have said it was used by Iraqi troops as a gigantic torture chamber.

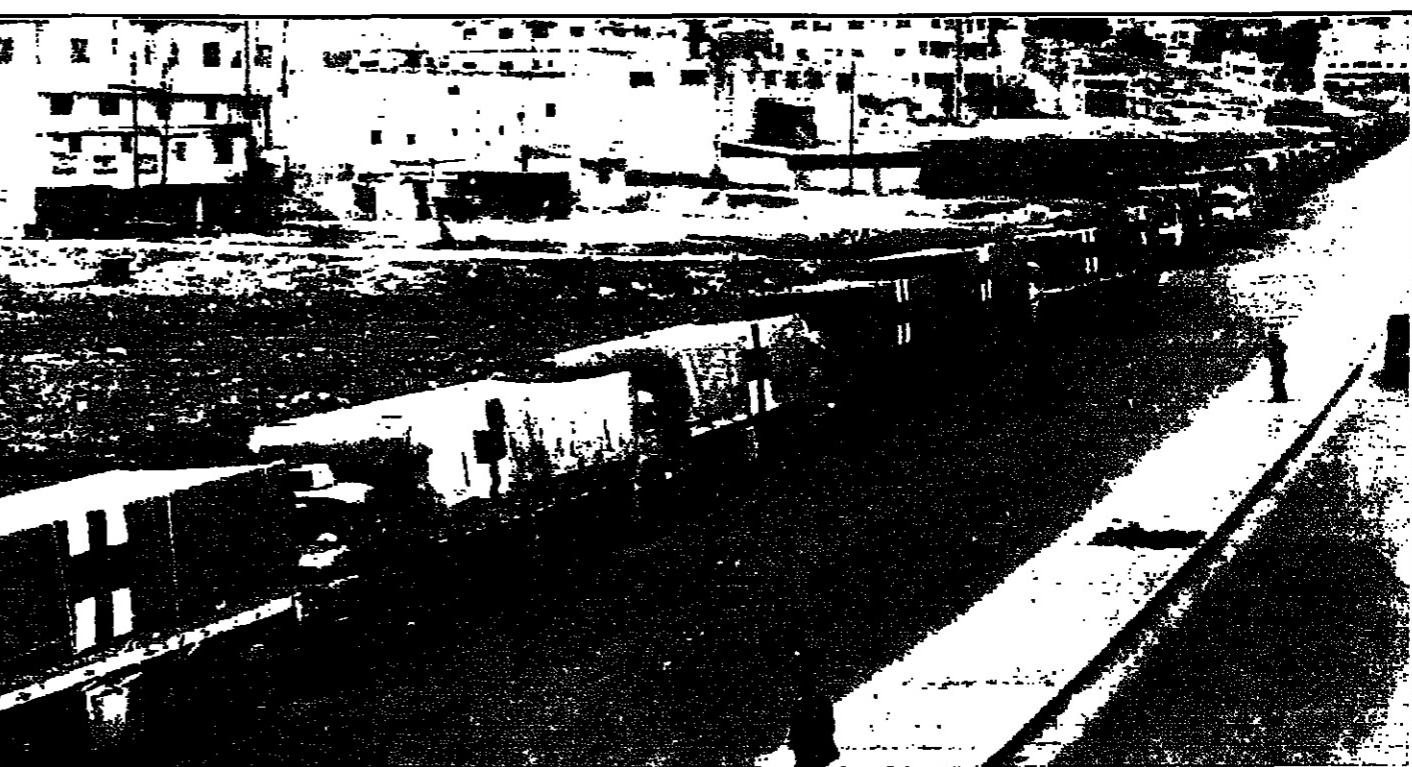
Several in the line Tuesday said they wished the U.S. government would run Kuwait for the next three months, a further indication of the exasperation among Kuwaitis.

"We don't mind to be the 51st state," said Husam Al Musaileem, a 27-year-old graduate from the East New Mexico University, in Portales, New Mexico. "We get confused with our government. They say something else."

Most of the people in line said they wanted to go to nearby countries, like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, to buy essential commodities and return.

The cut would effectively clip 700,000 bpd off independent analysts' estimates of OPEC production in February, but was around 1.1 million barrels below what ministers reckon to be OPEC's sustainable production capacity.

(Continued on page 5)



RELIEF CONVOY: Thirty-two trucks packed with relief supplies for the Iraqi people arranged by the International Committee

of the Red Cross (ICRC) leave Jordan Tuesday (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Israel rejects land-for-peace as condition for negotiations

Mubarak: Time not ripe for conference

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel dug in its heels in talks with the United States Tuesday and ruled out a land for peace swap as the basis for negotiations with Arab states and Palestinians.

U.S. officials gave no details of the meeting with Mr. Shamir.

Mr. Baker has said he did not want to miss an historic opportunity to build peace in the Middle East after the West and its Arab allies defeated Iraq.

But the head of Mr. Shamir's office said that concentrating on United Nations Security Council resolutions calling on Israel to withdraw from occupied territories would lead to failure.

Mr. Baker restated the U.S. position when he arrived Monday that Israel should comply with Resolutions 242 and 338.

"To focus only on the U.N. resolutions can lead only to failure," Yossi Ben Aharon, director

of the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that Baghdad's water supply is down to five per cent of its pre-war level.

Ibrahim Ahmad Al Nouri, head of the Iraqi Red Crescent, said in a letter to the Madrid-based Foundation for Peace against Hunger and Discrimination: "A few days ago cholera and typhoid started spreading in Iraq and cases are continuing to appear."

The foundation's president, Malek Ghafouri, told Reuters that Mr. Nouri also informed him that Iraq was in urgent need of

medicine to combat the spread of the diseases.

"He also told me Iraq urgently needed large quantities of baby powdered milk," said Mr. Ghafouri, a Spaniard of Iraqi origin.

Mr. Ghafouri, who has been in Iraq for the last 10 days, said Mr. Nouri informed him that officials of the Paris-based Medicins sans Frontieres had also been told about the spread of the disease.

Mr. Nouri gave no details about the number of cases or where in Iraq the diseases were spreading.

Mr. Ghafouri had visited eight hospitals in Baghdad where he said power shortages had "greatly affected medical operations which are restricted only to emergency cases."

He said: "Small power generators are not enough because they work for two hours only. There is no heating and some medicine needs special temper-

atures to be preserved."

He appealed to non-governmental organisations to provide Iraq with relief aid.

A 21-member United Nations mission arrived in Baghdad on Sunday with more than 20 tonnes of supplies, authorised by a Security Council decision to exempt humanitarian aid from economic sanctions still in force against Iraq for its takeover of Kuwait.

The supplies include water purification equipment and spare parts for pumping stations, as well as a variety of vaccines, medicines and baby food.

Four doctors from Medecins sans Frontieres, who visited hospitals and clinics in Baghdad to assess medical needs, said Sunday their group had a large quantity of medicines and medical equipment ready in Europe to be shipped to Iraq.

"We have a general idea about health conditions in Iraq, but we

'Information free of cost'

By Abdullah Hassanal
Telecommunications Correspondent

AMMAN — Telephone subscribers need not keep telephone directories or personal telephone books any more. They can dial 121 for information free of charge. Minister of Telecommunications Jamal Sarayrah has ordained Al Ra'i Arabic daily reported in a front-page article.

The paper said the decision was taken at a high level meeting chaired by the minister and attended by the director general of the Telecommunications Corporation and his assistants.

According to the paper, the decision came after an extensive meeting in which other matters were tackled. TCC director general gave immediate instructions for the implementation of the decision, the newspaper quoted him as saying in an interview.

Iraq says cholera, typhoid spreading

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said Tuesday that cases of cholera and typhoid were spreading and urgent medical supplies were needed to prevent epidemics.

Water and sewage systems were badly damaged by allied bombing during the Gulf war and many Iraqis are taking their drinking water straight from heavily-polluted rivers.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that Baghdad's water supply is down to five per cent of its pre-war level.

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tries' oil industries were wrecked by the war.

OPEC's production has been running flat out since a price and quota agreement established last July was suspended following the invasion.

That pact set a ceiling of 22.5 million bpd for the 13 OPEC members and the \$21 reference price.

The new production deal is an interim measure to see OPEC through the second quarter. Ministers are expected to reestablish quotas on a longer-term basis once the crisis in the Gulf is judged to be over. A plenary session is planned in early June.

Neither Iraq nor Kuwait, which produced around 4.5 million bpd prior to

Israel building for 11,000 emigres in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel, running the risk of more anger in Washington, has launched a programme to house at least 11,000 immigrants in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, a housing ministry report says.

A copy of the document was passed to Reuters by opposition members of parliament fighting government plans to more than double the Jewish population of the occupied territories.

Headed "State of Israel, housing and construction ministry, immigrants building administration," the report details plans to erect 5,800 prefabricated houses, mobile homes and permanent building in 63 settlements in the occupied territories.

A ministry document obtained by Reuters last week contained additional plans to house 88,000 Israelis in the occupied territories, where at least 90,000 Jews already live in fortified enclaves.

Leftist legislator Charlie Bitton said Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's rightwing government was boosting settlement to counter pressure on Israel to quit the occupied territories as part of a

future Middle East peace deal. "They want to create a situation that cannot be reversed, they want to torpedo peace," he told Reuters.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who began a two-day visit to Israel Monday, has called Jewish settlement in the occupied territories an obstacle to peace.

Israel promised the United States, its main source of diplomatic and financial support, that it will not direct immigrants to the occupied territories but has made no commitment not aid those who chose to settle there.

A housing ministry statement did not dispute the latest figures, saying only that the plans were in accordance with the law and government policy.

As well as housing ministry assistance for West Bank and Gaza sites, at least one settlement — Kiryat Arba — has an office of the ministry of immigrant absorption and another branch is planned for the settlement of Ariel.

The housing ministry is headed by Ariel Sharon, the hawkish former defence minister and architect of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Mr. Sharon on Sunday

announced his resignation from the ministerial committee overseeing the wave of immigration that brought 185,000 Soviet Jews to Israel in 1990 and is expected to bring some 300,000 more this year.

Mr. Sharon, who keeps the housing portfolio, said he was quitting the immigration committee chair because of lack of support from Mr. Shamir.

The immigrant housing plan showed at least 387 mobile homes already in place, with some already occupied and other families due to move in by April.

Fearful of international criticism, including the danger that Moscow might stop the flow of emigrants if they settle in the occupied territories, settlement officials have repeatedly played down their numbers.

A recent statement by the Jewish Agency, the main institution handling immigration, said: "Practically no Soviet immigrants chose to settle in the occupied territories."

An unofficial tally compiled by Reuters from figures supplied by settlers shows some 2,500 Soviet immigrants now living in the occupied territories.

Syria hails U.S. stand on Mideast

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria praised the United States Tuesday for the first time in years for a "positive" stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The official daily Tishreen in a front-page editorial hailed what it called progress in Washington's Middle East policy, after the Gulf war which allied both countries against Iraq.

"The joining of the United States to the group of those calling for an international conference constitutes in itself an important progress, especially as Israel strongly objects to a conference and was capable in the past of drawing obstacles to organizing it by exerting pressure on Washington," it said.

"We are prepared to do more than we have in the past," Defense Secretary Dick Cheney told reporters last week. "The security system failed."

The character of a permanent U.S. presence is a sensitive issue in Saudi Arabia, where opponents say the monarchy would be bowing to Western colonial interests if it agreed to a heightened foreign military presence, and in other Gulf countries.

Based on analyses by current and retired military officials, some of the ways the United States could widen its role in the region's security system include:

— A few dozen air force fighters could train out of air bases in Saudi Arabia or other friendly Gulf nations for a few months at a time, leave and be replaced by another wing or squadron of U.S. planes.

— A small central command headquarters staff of 75-80 might remain in Riyadh, or elsewhere on the Arabian Peninsula. At the invitation of a friendly Arab country, the central command could assist in the coordination of joint training exercises, said a Defense Department official who spoke Monday on the condition of anonymity.

— American troops could conduct frequent military exercises in the Middle East, joined by Saudis and other friendly forces. Egypt and the United States conducted military exercises in the 1980s called Bright Star.

— The United States could put enough gear in the Middle East to equip an armoured division or a mechanised infantry division, several military analysts suggested. The U.S. military could simply leave some of its gear behind after leaving.

— U.S. fighter jets were stationed in Saudi Arabia in the early 1960s, when rebels were at work in neighbouring North Yemen.

During the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, the air force dispatched radar-surveillance planes to Dhahran.

Thatcher: Israel, Arabs must achieve peace

DALLAS, Texas, (R) — Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Monday that the allied win in the Gulf conflict had provided Israel and the Arab state with the best chance in years to achieve a lasting peace between them.

She said the United States and its allies' "devastating" action to halt the aggression of the strong again the weak gives this area the best chance for a long time to achieve a secure peace.

Mrs. Thatcher made the remarks in a speech to an audience of 2,000 people, she was in Texas to visit her son Mark.

Mrs. Thatcher warned that coalition nations which joined forces to oust Iraqi troops from Kuwait could not themselves impose a settlement to resolve centuries of regional hostilities.

The eight allies also signed a post-Gulf war agreement last week forming a peacekeeping force in the Gulf, consisting mainly of Syrian and Egyptian troops.

The international consensus to find a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is enhanced with the clear call by American President George Bush to find a solution to the Middle East conflict," Tishreen said.

It said the positive American stand was the result of a meeting between Mr. Assad and Mr. Bush in Geneva last November, the first Syrian-American summit in more than 11 years.

Both agreed to improve joint cooperation despite Washington's accusation that Syria was supporting "terrorism."

The official daily in a front-page commentary Monday accused Israel of undermining peace chances by reaffirming its rejection of an international conference and its desire to keep the occupied Arab territories.

The statement said Mujahedeen posted along a 150-kilometre stretch of the Iran-Iraq border thwarted the attacking Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

Several of his companions were

U.S. ponders ways to increase military presence

WASHINGTON (AP) — 45-year-old U.S. military role in the Gulf will become decidedly larger in the wake of the Gulf war.

Post-war changes in the United States' low-key military presence in the Middle East may include American troop exercises, air force pilots using Arab airfields, even a permanent Saudi office for the army's central command.

"We are prepared to do more than we have in the past," Defense Secretary Dick Cheney told reporters last week. "The security system failed."

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Jordan, China discuss environmental issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — China's Ambassador to Jordan Zhang Liang discussed with Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Mohammad Al Zaben Jordan's participation in a Peking conference on the environment and development which will be held at the ministerial level in June.

The meeting in Peking is to pave the ground for a 1992 international conference on the environment and development which will be organised under the United Nations auspices, according to ministry officials.

The Peking conference is expected to focus attention on issues related to the environment in the developing world along with questions related to the transfer of modern technology to the world and there must be a greater degree of international cooperation in ways of safeguarding the world's environment.

Jordan joined 55 countries from around the world in an international conference on the protection of the ozone layer which was held in London last June.

Ministers responsible for environmental affairs in these countries agreed on amendments to an agreement to protect the earth's ozone layer from being depleted by man-made chemicals. The ministers agreed to phase out ozone destroying chlorofluorocarbons by the year 2000 and to establish the world's first environmental fund.

Amman municipality staff meet, tackle future plans

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first annual conference of Greater Amman Municipality staff was concluded Monday after discussing two working papers presented by Anas Qattan, the municipality's assistant under secretary for planning affairs and Nahib Suheimat, director of Abdali area, according to a report in the Arabic daily *Sawt Al Shabab*.

The first paper dealt with aspirations, plans of action and methods of work of the different municipal departments.

The first paper focussed on the need to achieve decentralisation in a serious bid to save the citizens time and efforts and to address their problems on the spot without having to go through the red tape.

Mr. Qattan noted that the Planning Department had established a special section, in each of the 20 areas of the municipality, to discuss the organisational problems of all the areas and make the subsequent necessary recommendations.

Mr. Qattan also made some

saying that the Third World countries will be holding contacts over subjects to be taken up at the Peking conference and issues of common concern.

He said that the advanced nations should bear a grave responsibility towards stemming pollution and helping the developing nations solve their environmental problems.

He stressed that there should be no restrictions on the transfer of modern technology to the Third World and there must be a greater degree of international cooperation in ways of safeguarding the world's environment.

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MASRI RECEIVES MOROCCAN ENVOY:

Morocco's Ambassador designate to Jordan, Mohammad Nabati Tuesday presented a copy of his credentials to Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri. Mr. Nabati, who succeeds Abdal Latif Laraki to the post, had assumed a number of ambassadorial missions for his country since 1974 when he was ambassador of Morocco to Qatar. Mr. Nabati also

served at the Arab League headquarters, the Moroccan Foreign Ministry and the Organisation of Islamic Conference. Mr. Nabati's predecessor, Mr. Laraki, who served as ambassador here since 1962, has been transferred to Cairo. Mr. Nabati is still to formally present his credentials to His Majesty King Hussein at the Royal Court.

Brotherhood sees multi-party system as solution to problems in Iraq

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan says it has been closely watching the ongoing events in the southern regions of Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war and is urging the Iraqi government to opt for a multi-party system to help end the current disturbances and prevent the country from total collapse.

"If the Iraqi government wants to defuse the present explosive situation, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan believes that the door must be thrown wide open for all political groups in Iraq to come forward and take part in the government in a democratic manner," said the group's official spokesman, Ziad Abu Ghaniema.

We believe that the single greatest weapon that the current government of Iraq has right now is to open the doors to democracy and thus prove null and void the interference of its enemies who are using the frustrations of the opposition groups in order to destroy Iraq from within," Abu Ghaniema, told the Jordan Times.

The continuation of a one-party rule under the Baathists, Abu Ghaniema said, will only weaken Iraq in the long run since "it would lay the ground work for

opposition parties which could albeit unintentionally hurt Iraq's national interests."

Despite this criticism, Abu Ghaniema did not express open support for the rebels in southern and northern Iraq.

"We call on the opposition parties to consider the special circumstances in which they find themselves and consider the national interests of Iraq," he said.

"It is the Americans and the Zionists and their 'coalition partners' that will benefit from the divisions in Iraq, no one else," Abu Ghaniema said.

But Abu Ghaniema also stressed that the Iraqi government must address the long standing grievances of banned political parties in Iraq, the Islamic parties in particular.

While many critics of the Muslim Brotherhood claim that the brotherhood supported Iraq in the Gulf crisis for the most part because "the man in the street supported Iraq and the party did not want to lose its constituency," Abu Ghaniema says otherwise.

"The Muslim Brotherhood has been banned in Iraq, banned and persecuted. But in the moment of need we stood with Iraq because the interest of the nation as a whole came first," he said.

According to Abu Ghaniema the brotherhood has historically put national interests before party interests in times of outside aggression.

Citing the example of Egypt, Abu Ghaniema said Jamal Abdul Nasser was "our greatest persecutor but the moment the Americans and Zionists aggressed Egypt we stood on Abdul Nasser's side because the nation comes first."

A brotherhood delegation met for the first time with Saddam Hussein and members of his government during the Gulf crisis and discussed, among other things, the future of their brethren in Iraq. "We stressed that if Iraq leaves Kuwait the coalition partners will no longer have an excuse to attack Iraq and we asked that Islamic party be given the freedom to operate freely in Iraq," Abu Ghaniema said.

"Nothing has happened yet, but five members of the brotherhood who had been on death row were given a personal pardon by Saddam Hussein," Abu Ghaniema said.

The position of the brotherhood towards the rebelling Muslim parties in the south, which are Shiites and not as the brotherhood Sunni Muslims, leaves the door open to a future role both with the current government and the rebels.

Ramadan regulations must be observed

AMMAN (J.T.) — During the holy month of Ramadan, which is expected to begin by March 17, strict observance must be made of regulations concerning fasting during day hours, according to Amman Governor Jawdat Esboul.

He said that the following regulations have to be strictly observed: All restaurants and cafes are to be closed during fasting hours and they cannot open until only two hours before the time of breakfast in the evening to prepare food.

All liquor stores, bars and nightclubs will be closed, except those that exist within the four or five star hotels which should only serve foreign tourists and guests inside their rooms.

Smoking is banned in the streets, public places and all types of means of transport.

Palestinian council to debate peace efforts

By Jamal Halaby
Associated Press Writer

AMMAN — Senior Palestinian leaders plan to meet and discuss Arab-Israeli peace efforts in the aftermath of the Gulf war, an official said Tuesday.

The speaker of the Palestine National Council (PNC), Sheikh Abdul Hamid Sayeh, said the Palestine Central Council was tentatively due to meet later this month in Tunisia.

Sheikh Sayeh said no date has been set, but he said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was preparing an agenda for the 92-member council, which helps guide PLO policy between meetings of the larger PNC.

The central council had been due to meet last August, but Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait and the resulting Gulf war forced a postponement of that plan.

"Many rapid developments have taken place during the past few months... and we want to know where we stand and what could be done to settle the Palestinian problem," Sayeh told the Associated Press.

The meeting will focus on events which have taken place in Iraq and world discussions on settling the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Sayeh said that the council will also discuss Palestinian representation in any further Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The PLO's sympathy towards Iraq in the Gulf war has led the United States and its Arab allies to speak of trying to bypass the PLO, or at least its current leadership, in peace discussions.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is currently touring the region to explore possibilities of reviving Arab-Israeli peace efforts.

"Some sides are trying to distance the PLO from representing Palestinians, but our people have chosen this organization to be their sole and legitimate representative," Sayeh said.

"It will remain as such so long as our people wants it to be," he added.

JNRCS team leaves for Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — A team from the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) led by the society's Vice President Mohammad Mutlaq Al Hadid left for Baghdad Tuesday to discuss relief operations and the Iraqi people's needs with Ibrahim Al Nouri, head of the Iraqi National Red Crescent Society, and other officials.

Consultations on facilitating and coordinating the arrival of relief supplies with the Iraqi society will be discussed by Mr. Hadid and his group who are

expected to tour a number of Iraqi society's relief centres.

Mr. Hadid's visit follows the arrival in Baghdad Tuesday of 115 tonnes of medicines and child food from JNRCS.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Tuesday sent 33 trucks laden with 600 tonnes of relief supplies to Iraq from Madaba, South of Amman. It was announced Tuesday that a convoy of trucks carrying 50 tonnes of food supplies left for Baghdad. The gift was raised in Madaba district by local organisations.

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department (PSD) Director Maj. Gen. Fadel Ali Fuheid Tuesday said that traffic poses one of the most important challenges facing the Jordanian society, and called for intensifying efforts to fend off its dangers and put an end to the bloodshed resulting from it.

Addressing a symposium held Tuesday at the Traffic Department to discuss philosophy and objectives of the Friends of the Traffic Police Society, Maj. Gen. Fuheid praised the efforts made by the society members saying that their cooperation with the traffic police in detecting and reporting traffic violations reflects their interest in safeguarding the safety and security of citizens.

Also addressing the symposium was Chairman of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents Zuhair Malhas who said that the society maintains excellent cooperation with the PSD.

He pointed out that the PSD is contemplating the establishment of a society similar to the Friends of the Traffic Police Society, with the aim of assisting public security men in controlling security violations on certain social occasions.

Also addressing the symposium was Chairman of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents Zuhair Malhas who said that the society maintains excellent cooperation with the PSD.

He voiced hope that the Friends of the Traffic Police Society will serve as a pilot experiment which could be applied in various

governorates and districts of Jordan, after assessing its impact and results.

Maj. Gen. Fuheid criticised certain segments of the Jordanian society who violate traffic regulations and who defy the security regulations by firing live ammunition during celebrations and weddings.

He pointed out that the PSD is contemplating the establishment of a society similar to the Friends of the Traffic Police Society, with the aim of assisting public security men in controlling security violations on certain social occasions.

The establishment of the society was aimed at bringing accidents to the bare minimum and alleviating the suffering caused by traffic accidents.

Mr. Malhas said that it was

high time to organise and control traffic, given the fact that Jordan has now more than 250,000 cars running along its roads.

"Since it is impossible to provide a traffic policeman in all cases and circumstances, it has become incumbent on all citizens to cooperate in controlling traffic violations, be they dangerous violations or otherwise," he said.

The Traffic Police Department Director Col. Ahmad Al Dumour landed the idea of establishing the Friends of Traffic Police Society, saying that it creates relations between the police and the public. He added that traffic problems are major cause for loss of life, injuries and damage to property.

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The new sideshow

U.S. MEDIA are all of a sudden putting the squeeze once again on Damascus after playing up reports that Syria is now supplying its armed forces with newer models of Scud missiles imported from North Korea. Surely the U.S. government — and most probably some media people as well — knew well in advance that Syria did not take the Gulf crisis as an opportunity to disarm or stop supplying its army with the latest weapon systems needed for its defence. But it seems credible that Washington decided to maintain silence on continuing Syrian armament till the Gulf war was over before raising the issue publicly and forcefully. So, first, it only took a few hours after Israel sounded alarm bells about the arrival of new Scud missiles to Syria for the Americans to echo the same sentiments and "sense of danger." Then, several days later, President Bush's spokesman, no less, attacked Syria on another front. When White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater was asked yesterday about a March 10 report by CBS Television on Syria's alleged record on torture, his reply was: "I think that's the part of the show that was skewed. There has been no change in our policy towards Syria. They remain on the terrorist list. I don't think anybody has illusions about Assad and his actions over the last many years." Fitzwater went on to say that everyone is familiar with Amnesty International's documentation of the "atrocities that have occurred there."

The Americans are at it again. Hardly several months after Syria joined some other Arab countries in the coalition that fought Iraq, Damascus itself has become the target of U.S. allegation that it is not only a major perpetrator of torture but also runs a school on torture! The question that comes to mind is whether targeting Syria now is a prelude to some concerted action by Washington similar to that vicious campaign launched against Iraq last April. Israel cannot be too far behind this new campaign against Syria, just like it was not when President Saddam Hussein threatened to burn half of Israel if the Jewish state attacked Iraq during that month.

It is a well-known fact that Iraq was concerned and subjected to a savage and catastrophic war basically because it constituted a regional power that did not tally with Washington's posture in the Gulf and Middle East regions. With Iraq out of the way, is it not probable that Syria will be also concerned in due course just like Iraq was and then made the object of another onslaught against another Arab country simply because it poses a military threat to Israel and because of its human rights record.

At a time when all attention is focused on peace efforts, in light of the emergence of "new thinking," in the area, it is not easy to talk about and dwell on side issues that do not help the cause of making progress on the peace front and bringing about reconciliation. But it is always important to remember that the Gulf crisis, in our opinion, started long before the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait and that it was ignited by media reports against the Arab country and regime like that which appeared in CBS' "60 Minutes" on March 10. In April it was Israel plus the Western, mainly American and British, media against Iraq. Today, it is the first combine against Syria. Tomorrow, what happens is anybody's guess.

It is well and good that the U.S. government and media are interested in furthering democracy and human rights everywhere. They should. What we have to warn against, though, is that if the Americans are really serious and willing to bring about peace to the Middle East, their effort should not be derailed by those who can rock the boat, and who have made spreading the poison their business and goal.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Tuesday described the statement by the Gulf Cooperation Council's foreign ministers and those of Syria, Egypt and the United States as containing positive elements because it underlines the need for respect of the international legitimacy. The statement, issued at the end of these ministers' meeting in Saudi Arabia called for the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which means calling on Israel to abide by these resolutions and pull out its forces from the occupied Arab territories, the paper noted. But while the statement emphasises the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of any Arab state, it describes the current Iraqi government's measures to deal with mutinies in the south as suppression, the paper noted. It said that the foreign ministers should not have marred their statement by attacking Iraq, neither should they have ignored mentioning the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Palestinian people and their ongoing struggle to end occupation of the Arab territories. The achievement of peace in the region, as referred to in the statement cannot materialise without the full participation of the people and their representatives and their governments, the paper noted.

Sawt Al Shabab Arabic daily said that President Bush's initiative to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions cannot see the light and can only be considered as a political manoeuvre unless it is backed by action. The paper said that many Arabs believe that the initiative came at a time when the U.S. administration was trying hard to contain the Arab masses rage over America's aggression on Iraq, and they need action not mere words. The current U.S. moves to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, said the paper, has already drawn Israel's instant rejection although this initiative is based on international legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions. The paper said that James Baker has already heard this rejection which came as no surprise to us because it was not the first rejection by Israel of U.S. and other initiatives.

Economic Forum

New era: New economic strategies

THE way the Gulf crisis ended indicates that the United States will tighten its grip on world affairs. Bad as that may be in so many respects, it might have a positive outcome in economic terms. Already, the world is slowly drifting towards globalisation of markets as national economic borders melt away. The multinational corporations set the stage for this trend; the success of the European Common Market gave it a boost and the fall of European socialism has brightened its prospects.

A global economy is necessarily based on the philosophy of market economy where economic freedom reigns. Economic liberalisation is now sweeping through the second and third worlds, under the banner of organisations such as the International Monetary Fund. The United States is the back stage player which oversees, and where necessary will hereafter dictate, the pace and direction of the events.

The results of the Gulf crisis and war suggest that the Middle East area will sooner or later be a part of the new economic world order. Of course, some Mideastern countries, particularly the Gulf states, are already free open economies. The growing American influence in this area will be used to push and ensure

the movement of others in the same direction.

The biggest leverage in this regard is the astronomical costs of reconstruction in the area which dwarf its financial resources to the extent that outside aid has to be called in. Estimates on reconstruction costs of Kuwait started from \$10 billion two months ago and mounted up to \$40 billion at the eve of the ground war to jump to \$100 billion a week ago. A report in the Financial Times has just put the figure at \$200 billion. Iraq's reconstruction costs might be as high or even higher. And do not forget Saudi Arabia. The overall figure might run up to something between \$400-\$500 billion. The combined daily oil production of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in July 1990, that is the month preceding the crisis, reached around 13 million barrels. At an average of \$18 per barrel, that translates into \$85 billion a year. The portion of this income which will be spared for investment or reconstruction cannot exceed the average propensity to save which averages a maximum of 25 per cent in developing countries. This means that the oil producing Arab Gulf states need 20-25 years to pay for reconstruction costs on top of the defence burdens. But it also means that this task is

practically beyond their capabilities and this is why foreign aid must be called in.

Such aid will have to come mainly from countries like the U.S., Germany and Japan. Most of it will have to be channelled through the World Bank and IMF or similar institutions established for this purpose. This is exactly the point where the opportunity rises to navigate the whole Middle East area into the strait of the new economic world order. The Gulf states have already been stressing the point that any assistance they might give to other Arab countries which are members of the coalition against Iraq must be channelled through IMF and under its mechanism based on the conditions of adjustment policies which lead, of course, to market economies.

Fortunately, the transformation of the world into a global free economy is not a bad thing, especially when the gap between the very poor and very rich is seriously addressed in the context and spirit of the one global family of nations. Here, the countries of the Middle East must capture the spirit of this new era and rewrite their development strategies and economic policies. Democracy and economic freedom are the name of the new game.

Soviet weaknesses exposed in Gulf war not easy to fix

By Michael Putzel

The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The Gulf war exposed weaknesses in Soviet weaponry that will be difficult to correct and may well cost the Soviet security at home and previously cash from arms sales abroad.

When the brief conflict ended, the battlefield was littered with burning tanks, artillery and evidence everywhere that the Iraq's Soviet-built weapons were no match for western technology. Kremlin Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov hastily announced a review of the Soviets' entire air defence system.

But experts in military technology and Soviet economics agree there is little the Kremlin can do, certainly not for a long time, to overcome the failures put on display for the world to see in the six-week war.

The war undoubtedly wounded the international market for

Soviet hardware, a critical source of foreign currency. Arms sales rank second only to oil as a source of convertible currency for the Soviets.

"Typically, their hard currency earnings were about \$30 to \$32 billion a year, of which oil was about half, or a little more, and weapons sales were about a quarter," said Charles Wolf, an economist at the Rand Corp. private research group.

From the first minutes of the war, U.S. aircraft slipped undetected past Iraqi radar to knock out the "eyes" of their enemy and render much of the dangerous Soviet-made hardware useless.

In the end, the Iraqis lost 1,100 tanks for every one lost by the United States. More than 2,200 Iraqi artillery pieces were destroyed. Of the 23 U.S. planes shot down, all were hit by relatively primitive anti-aircraft weapons. Iraq's sophisticated planes and surface-to-air missiles

were out of commission.

The Gulf war essentially showed a technological gap between the superpowers that the Kremlin no longer has the resources to close.

Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, chief of the Soviet general staff in the late 1970s and early 1980s warned that the West was surging ahead in weapons technology while the Soviets concentrated on fielding massive ground forces.

"Marshal Ogarkov has probably been looking at the Persian Gulf as the realisation of a nightmare," said Abraham Becker, director of the Rand-UCLA Centre for Soviet Studies.

The Soviet gained their super-power status by financing a huge military, largely at the expense of the civilian population, which was compelled to forgo modern health care, adequate housing and consumer goods. The Kremlin spends 16 per cent to 20 per cent of the country's gross national product on defence, compared with 6 per cent to 7 per cent in the United States.

With the centrally controlled economy now falling apart, there is little the Kremlin can do to finance an expensive course correction for the military.

"For a Soviet military leader to look around and say the Gulf proves we need all these wonderful gadgets and let's go out and get them would be to ignore the vital connection between the military technology that produces those gadgets and the economic infrastructure and industrial capability that is necessary to produce the military technology," Becker said.

"They really have a fundamental obstacle, which they have not been able to deal with and which constitutes the bedrock problem they're facing," he explained.

"To be able to do as the allies did in the Gulf, they really would have to revolutionise

their economy," and despite the reforms initiated by President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "they haven't really done anything about the fundamental issues."

Wolf, the Rand economist, concluded that substantial cuts in military spending are essential.

"They're in tough shape," Wolf said. "Gorbachev has some options, all of which are bad."

He added the Soviets may choose to reallocate funds already earmarked for the military to concentrate more on the "weak spots" Yazov mentioned. Indeed, there are indications they already had begun trimming funds from the navy, and they are slashing the size of their armies as they bring troops home from eastern Europe.

"The lesson of this war is that large numbers of even fairly good ordnance, artillery, tanks and so on won't do the job," said Raymond L. Garthoff, a former arms control negotiator and ex-

pert in military affairs at the Brookings Institution. He expects Soviet generals to argue they should put more money into developing high technology communications and intelligence gathering, night fighting capability and smart munitions.

Don Hicks, a former senior Defense Department official involved in weapons development, said the Soviet military has concentrated for decades on developing defences that didn't work in Iraq and aren't designed to counter the Stealth aircraft that took out Iraqi radar and missile sites at the start of the air war.

"The bottom line is, if they're really honest with themselves in their analysis, until they can handle Stealth, it doesn't matter much what do because their systems are going to be highly vulnerable to Stealth aircraft coming in the first strike," Hicks said.

Arab people want justice in region

By Adrian Hamilton

IF THE Gulf War was won in double-quick time, the peace looks as if it could be lost just as decisively. The very people we ought to be supporting in Iraq are being repressed by the Republican Guard without a squeak of protest from the victorious allies sitting but a few miles away. The Sabah family is being restored to Kuwait to the sound of shredded promises for democratic reform and the dull thud of beatings handed out to Palestinians, Yemenis or anyone deemed a "collaborator".

The plan for establishing peace and security in the region has come down to an Arab Gulf force with the dangerous addition of Syria and the exclusion of the region's most important player — Iran. Hopes of a Middle East peace conference have proved stillborn as even the French, sensing that this is no time to push against the U.S., have retreated from the idea. What was meant to be a victory for the United Nations has ended in what the Arabs always thought it would be: an irresistible demonstration of U.S. power and influence.

To say this is not to join in the chorus of anti-Americanism that has so undermined the anti-war case in the Gulf crisis. The problems have not arisen from some deep-laid plot by Washington to

rule the world or lower the price of oil, or give vent to the investments made in Star Wars, as the left would have it. The opposite is true. President Bush never had a clear peace policy. His political aim has been to win a decisive victory that would erase the memory of Vietnam, with the lowest possible allied casualties.

The peculiarity of this war was that it was fought by a country which no longer could pay for its own troops. Whatever the accusations against it, America has neither the resources nor the will to repeat this kind of venture. If anything, it would genuinely like to clear the board and sweep away with everything tidy behind it.

Yet to accept that U.S. intentions in the Gulf may be well-meaning is not to say they are innocent. Of course, Washington has its own interests: its exclusive relationship with Saudi Arabia; its desire to ensure Israel's protection against any Arab military power; its determination to keep the Soviet Union, or indeed most European or Japanese, from competing in the Gulf. The question for the peace is: having achieved its domestic political war aims, how hard is the U.S. going to pursue its international aims with the peace?

There is little point in denying the U.S. pre-eminence in this

matter. None of the potential dissenters — the Soviet Union, France and certainly not Britain — are in any mood to challenge Washington's immediate hegemony. Nor do they feel it wise to consider the contracts, the oil and the commerce to be dispensed after the victory.

That need not be a bad thing. America may be an interested victor but it is also a powerful one. The only nation able to field an army powerful enough to face down Israel in the aftermath. Bush, and Secretary of State James Baker, are not like their predecessors. They owe no votes to the Israeli lobby nor do they now need to apologise to the government there.

Bush can, if he wishes, put enormous pressure on Yitzhak Shamir to start the peace process. The question is whether he is willing, if push comes to shove.

If the West can make economic aid and international acceptance the carrot of democratic reform in Eastern Europe, why can it not do the same in Iraq where the economic problems are more desperate and the democratic urge all the more in need of outside encouragement? To ignore this now is to ensure that all the frictions which brought about this crisis will recur within the decade, only in an even less manageable or defeatable form — Observer.

Iran asserts role in the Gulf

By Shahroug Akhavi

COLUMBIA, S.C.

IRAN'S re-emergence as a Gulf power is a breathtaking consequence of Iraq's defeat in Kuwait. Its enhanced position has been helped by a gradual recovery from its devastating war with Iraq in the 1980's. But the main factor was its decision to sit on the sidelines and not help President Saddam Hussein, even after the Iraqi ruler gave up his country's remaining war claims against Iran.

The strategy of Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Iranian president, paid off, and Tehran is as much a winner in the war as the Arab members of the allied coalition are. As a sign of Iran's new stature, Mr. Rafsanjani can now assert himself, as he did recently, calling for Mr. Hussein to step down.

Suddenly, Iran is seen by the Gulf nations as an important player in regional security arrangements. Indeed, Secretary of State James Baker has declared that Iran will play an important political role in the Gulf. This new

position raises Iran's credibility with European nations, whose economic assistance it badly needs. Iran even has an unexpected bargaining chip in its talks with the Iraqis on reparations for the 1980's war. It holds many Iraqi planes, which sought sanctuary in Iran during the allied air war.

Will Iran's new stature encourage moderation or militancy? It is a mark of the change in its leadership that even the huge number of American troops in the region did not provoke action against Washington. To be sure, Ali Khamenei, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's replacement as spiritual leader, has denounced the U.S. role in the Gulf, and Mr. Rafsanjani called several times for American withdrawal.

But more significant is the muted nature of the reaction. When militants called for demonstrations against the American presence, few people showed up. Since the Ayatollah Khomeini's death in June 1989, the top mullahs have made economic development their main priority, an emphasis reflected in numerous speeches by the leaders.

Iraqi rebels would suggest to the West that the country is up to its old tricks. And they understand that economic assistance is contingent on a willingness to act more responsibly in the world.

Thus, it is doubtful that Iran will provide military support for its religious brethren in Iraq. More likely it will provide some financial assistance and possibly grant permission to Iranian "volunteers" to enter Iraq to fight alongside the Shiites against the Sunni-dominated government. Although the Iraqi Shiites did not respond to Iranian incitement to rebel against Mr. Hussein during the Iran-Iraq war, they are now more likely to accept guidance.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rafsanjani can tell his domestic critics that he has not abandoned the cause of the revolution. In the end, he is a pragmatic survivor, and if he plays his cards right he will emerge from the Gulf crisis stronger than before.

Shahroug Akhavi is professor of international studies at the University of South Carolina. The article is reprinted from The New York Times.

LETTERS

Radio Jordan

To the Editor:

I would like to thank the English service of Radio Jordan for their excellent broadcasting throughout the years. I admire the sophistication and warmth of the DJs as well as respect the hard work that the staff performs under the able directorate of Mr. Jawad Zada.

However, during the Gulf Crisis I felt quite frustrated by the length of the news bulletins for more often than not, they were only a few minutes. Because I am dependent on the English service as are others like me, I clung to the radio anxiously awaiting the news concerning the Gulf war. Often, I was bitterly disappointed and sought more information from other sources. Yet, all my faith and trust were centered on Radio Jordan and listening to foreign broadcasting stations only angered me more for their news about Iraq was very biased and irritating.

I realise that the English service is understaffed and perhaps overworked. But I feel that this service is very important and should not be neglected because it not only informs people like me, but also informs persons who might be staying here at the time such as foreign journalists and diplomats as well listeners abroad. If more

S. Arabia seeks U.S. military aid

DHAHRAN — Saudi Arabia's defence minister requested tanks and warplanes from the United States Monday, and his forces celebrated victory over Iraq with ancient saber dances and salutes from modern jets.

Prince Sultan said his country needed more defensive weaponry to maintain post-war stability, adding it would look elsewhere if the United States could not provide them.

"The United States government, administration or the Congress, they have to understand our needs and our ambition of trying to maintain the stability of the region," the minister said in an interview.

Prince Sultan, second in line to the Saudi throne, flew into Dhahran's military airbase to review planes that took part in the war against Iraq.

"There is lots of requested armaments that was presented to the United States a long time ago and we hope it will be approved and confirmed by the congress."

He said negotiations were still needed to settle on the price of the military equipment, which included tanks and warplanes.

Saudi Arabia plans to double the current size of its 65,000-man force.

The Bush administration proposed selling 21 billion worth of military hardware to Saudi Arabia but the package ran into opposition from supporters of Israel in Congress.

As a result, the administration split off \$7.3 billion in "immediate needs" for the Saudi contribution to Operation Desert Shield and removed controversial longer-term items such as new

Karbala

(Continued from page 1)

groups facing the Iraqi army.

One source said that in addition to the controversy over whether to form a government and parliament-in-exile, the delegates also differed on whether to admit two new opposition factions backed by Saudi Arabia to their alliance.

The Free Iraq Council of Saed Saleh Jaber and the National Salvation Front of Saleh Omar Aly "do not carry real weight on the ground in Iraq, but Saudi Arabia wants their representation in the Iraqi opposition alliance to be effective," the source said.

"Some major opposition groups also want the two new factions to be effectively represented in the alliance to provide the opposition with Arab backing and decrease the influence Iran has through its Shi'ite Muslim allies," he added.

Iraq is known to back its fellow Shi'ite Muslims in Iraq, and has given refuge to tens of thousands of them.

Some opposition groups fear that Iran will support the establishment of an Islamic republic like its own in southern Iraq where most Shi'ites live.

But Iran has come out strongly in favour of the territorial integrity of post-war Iraq.

Conference members said most of the deliberations by the 23 factions were backstage negotiations outside the three-day conference.

President Saddam chaired a meeting on Monday of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and ruling Baath Party, Radio Baghdad said.

The Radio said the joint meeting heard a report submitted by RCC Vice-Chairman Izzat Ibrahim al-Saif on a tour of the governorates of Wasit and Maysan.

The two areas were claimed by travellers, Iraqi exiles and Western intelligence reports to be scene of heavy fighting.

"(Mr. Ibrahim's) report also reviewed the action taken during the tour to complete the tasks of restoring the normal state of affairs and the usual services," the radio said without giving details.

It said the RCC and the Baath leadership — Iraq's highest authorities — also reviewed "developments in the political situation."

Kuwait

(Continued from page 1)

"If I wanted to leave Kuwait, I could have fled during the occupation," said one man. "I just want to get things for my family and come back."

Rice, water, candles, an electrical generator and toner for a copying machine were on Faisal Al Rashed's list. The 43-year-old businessman said he had been coming to the stadium since Sunday, when the Ministry of Interior began accepting applications.

"When Kuwait was freed we thought airplanes would come and drop food from the skies," he said. "Now we realise we have to fight for ourselves."

Turkey hopes to tie Middle East region together with water pipeline

By Zeynep Alemdar
The Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkey is reviving its "peace pipeline" project, a plan to link six Gulf countries, Syria and Jordan by the world's longest water line.

"We are in need of physical evidence for lasting peace and stability in the area," said Necati Utkan, Turkey's ambassador to Iraq, who promoted the water project when President Turgut Ozal introduced it in 1987.

Turkey is the only country in the dry Middle East with excess water. The threat to desalination plants by the huge Gulf oil slick emphasised water's value.

Under the Turkish proposal, two pipelines would carry a total of 1.6 billion gallons to the eight countries each day from the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers, which flow into the

Mediterranean.

"It will be the largest water conveyance project in the world," said Graham Poke, a project director at Brown and Root, a Texas-based company which has done research on the plan.

The network's western branch would supply Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia along a 2,654-kilometres route. A 3,861-kilometres pipeline would cross Saudi Arabia to Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Oman.

About 30 million people in the region could benefit.

Officials say Iraq was not included because it has enough water, but that it would be technically possible to extend the pipeline if Iraq entered the project later.

As first proposed, the net-

work would have included the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Turkey could provide eight per cent of Saudi Arabia's water with the pipelines, officials said. A senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said water could be delivered for about 80 cents a cubic meter (264 gallons), roughly half the cost from a desalination plant.

Turkey is broaching the "peace pipeline" again to generate regional goodwill and gain prestige after the Gulf war, officials say. It also hopes to earn hundreds of millions of dollars annually from selling its water.

Ozal wants to use water to expand Turkey's political and economic ties with its neighbours. He has invited regional leaders to a "water summit" in November on better ways of utilising the resource.

"To establish enduring

peace in the region, it is necessary to begin a process focused on economic interdependence among the middle East nations," Ozal wrote recently in ABC, a Spanish daily.

Construction of the western pipeline will cost about \$8.5 billion and the Gulf line about \$12.5 billion, according to a study Brown and Root did three years ago. The system would take eight years to build.

Ozal has suggested new oil and gas pipelines run parallel to the water line so the trade would be two-way.

"It is the project of the future," he said in interview. "It will turn the whole Arabian peninsula into a new green land and bring countries closer."

The war gave the rich Gulf nations a dramatic reminder of their water shortage. They rely on desalination plants, which can be shut down by oil

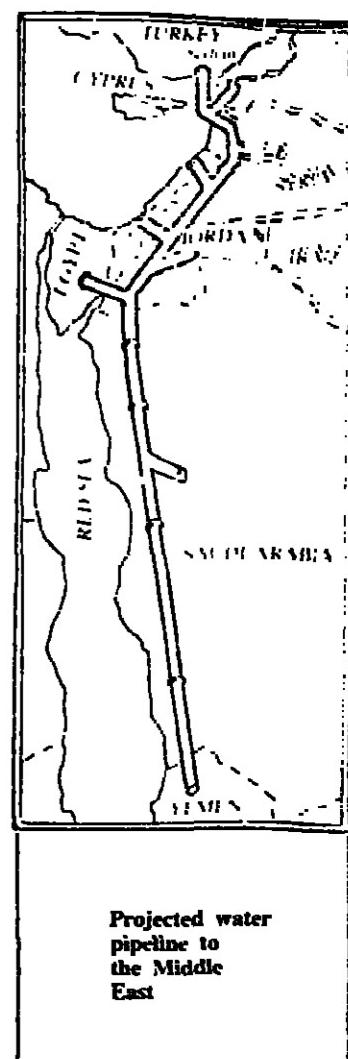
and Iraq to fill the reservoir of its giant Ataturk dam.

The pipeline idea has not developed to the point where Turkey has begun formal talks with the potential customers, but it recently asked Brown and Root for additional technical information.

Saudi Arabia seems agreeable this time. Its approval is considered vital to convincing others.

Abdul Aziz Khojeh, Saudi ambassador to Turkey, said his country could trade oil for water.

"It is the project of the future," he said in interview. "It will turn the whole Arabian peninsula into a new green land and bring countries closer."



Coming to terms with stress?

ILO Feature

The "end-of-the-century affliction," stress continues to ravage all levels of society. It strikes especially hard in industrialised countries. In Japan, for instance, 60 per cent of the 120 million inhabitants appear to be affected.

Developing countries are not spared either: a recent poll in Morocco revealed that 40 per cent of company executives live under constant pressure.

Whether it is termed "professional sociopathy" or "a sickness of modern societies," the phenomenon first spreads within the world of work. "The spirit of challenge" and the constant pressure of competition are the chief causes. It is not surprising that executives seem vulnerable.

In the United States, 45 per cent of salaried-workers employed in posts of responsibility are subjected to excessive stress and 15 per cent of them are prone to nervous depression; in Switzerland, one executive out of four admits to being seriously dissatisfied with his work.

But stress does not necessarily increase with the level of responsibility, in fact the reverse. Research in several countries — Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom and notably Sweden — has shown that the incidence of stress-related illness is higher among workers. A study carried out on 270,000 persons in the United States reveals that the rate of heart diseases is higher among non-executive salaried workers and that it decreases as one moves up the hierarchical subject.

Doctors, psychologists and specialists in the organisation of work are increasingly concerned by the phenomenon. Institutes or centres for stress research have been set up. For several years, the ILO has been active in research and publication on the

subject but also manual workers, the groups termed "vulnerable" — women, older or handicapped workers, migrants — those whose duties are modified or phased out by the introduction of new technologies, and all who are deprived of personal initiative and doomed to monotonous and repetitive tasks.

Moreover, stress can be aggravated by relationship problems, by the fear of losing one's job, or by a host of other non-occupational factors such as family problems, health anxieties, commuting and financial worries.

From the early symptoms to the real illnesses that can result from it, the harmful consequences of stress first concern a person's health. The most frequent disorders range from chronic fatigue to depression, by way of insomnia, anxiety, migraine, emotional upset, stomach ulcers, allergies, skin disorders, lumbago and rheumatic attacks, tobacco and alcohol abuse, culminating with the most serious consequences of all: heart attacks, accidents and even suicides.

The effects of stress on the functioning of enterprises are no less spectacular: demotivation, work-related accidents, frequent or prolonged sick leave. In the United States, the overall cost of occupationally-induced stress is estimated at \$60 billion a year.

Doctors, psychologists and specialists in the organisation of work are increasingly concerned by the phenomenon. Institutes or centres for stress research have been set up. For several years, the ILO has been active in research and publication on the

subject.

It is advisable to tackle the problem from all angles says Dr. Georges Coppé, Head of the Medical Section of the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Branch.

To various researchers, it seems vital and urgent to develop a positive approach to stress

emphasising its importance in the search for dynamic adaptation to a given situation, rather than concentrating on its pathological aspects.

From a physiological viewpoint, stress is a mechanism that mobilises extra energy in response to sudden demand. Intended to meet emergency situations, stress mechanisms prepare for struggle or escape and are also those of survival. "If health is considered a dynamic equilibrium, stress is a part of it for there is no health without interaction with other people and with the environment. Only excesses are pathological," points out Dr. Coppé.

In practice, the first symptoms act as a kind of alarm signal which reminds the individual that the body has limits not to be exceeded. If, in the case of an executive, for example, stress can be a driving force which allows him to surpass himself and retain a fighter mentality, any exaggeration could seriously harm his health. It would be advisable then for him to organise himself better so as to avoid or minimise tensions and vexations.

"More explicitly," explains Dr. Coppé, "the notion itself of stress challenges our usual scientific conceptions because it establishes a bridge between physical, mental and social well-being. An attack on one means an attack on the others. Thus, a cut in the hand is a physical wound but at the same time it affects the mind, provoking distress or anxiety, and can cause functional disability and incapacity to work. Similarly, the loss of a job has an impact on the mind and on the physical health of the individual."

"As long as one continues to compartmentalise man and his health, one will be unable to understand either fatigue or stress," Dr. Coppé concludes.

The medico-social implications of this approach to stress are important and are largely misunderstood. Thus, for example, in case of an accident, workplace health services should not simply administer first aid and send the victim to hospital but should also be actively concerned with minimising the psychological and social consequences of the accident and ensuring a follow-up until the injured person returns to work.

In an overall conception of health at work, ergonomics and the different methods of work organisation play a vital role. It is essential that every worker benefit from optimal conditions so as to give the best of himself without prejudice to his health that is, his physical, mental and social well-being. These conditions are not only material: it is necessary at the same time to be concerned with freeing the individual from certain fears such as being dismissed, of not seeing his efforts recognised or of being the victim of his chief's sudden changes of mood. One of the major causes of stress is the fear of the unknown and a lack of control over the duties to be carried out and over the organisation of work. Under these circumstances, the treatment of stress and its prevention are not medical matters, but are "information" and "participation."

To what extent should enterprises conceive and set up anti-stress programmes and above all make them known? In so doing, do they not risk tarnishing their "image" and being viewed by the public or trade unions as "stressful enterprises"? The question is open. The answer could perhaps be found in setting up health programmes at work based on three requirements set out by the ILO: a safe and healthy working environment, well-being of the worker and respect for human dignity, and the possibility for the worker to develop and serve society through his work.

Monotony at the workplace is as harmful as excessive diversity or work overload. Under-stimulation and over-stimulation are both a cause of stress. It seems necessary and urgent to develop a positive approach to stress by keeping in view its value in the search for a dynamic adaptation to a given situation rather than by focusing systematically on its pathological aspects.



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U.S.-led allies increase aid to states hardest hit economically by Gulf crisis

LUXEMBOURG (R) — The world's richest countries Monday pledged \$834 million in new aid to nations hardest hit by the Gulf crisis and said they would study how to repair economic damage wrought by the war.

The meeting of 27 wealthy countries in the Gulf Crisis Financial Coordination Group, was the first effort by the United States and its allies to help the Middle East recover from six weeks of fighting to drive Iraq from Kuwait.

They said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank should play a key role in any long-term effort to help the region.

But some delegations reacted coolly to U.S. Secretary of States James Baker's idea of a regional development bank.

Ankara asks Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to employ Turks

ANKARA (R) — Turkey has asked Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to employ more Turks and ease the return of thousands of its workers who left jobs during the Gulf crisis.

Anatolian News Agency said Tuesday that Labour Minister Irene Aykut met the Kuwaiti and Saudi ambassadors to discuss job opportunities.

The envos told Aykut Turks would be given priority among migrant workers, the agency said.

Prime Minister Yildirim Akbulut is planning a visit to Kuwait to promote Turkish firms for rebuilding work.

Turkey's official unemployment figure is 13 per cent. Western labour sources put it at around 20 per cent.

"There was much scepticism about new institutional set-ups... the response needs to be fast, flexible and broad," said Luxembourg Treasury Minister Yves Mersch who hosted the meeting.

U.S. undersecretary of the treasury David Mulford said the allies, including the European Community, Japan, and the Gulf states, had pledged \$14.86 billion to Monday and that new pledges to the end of 1991 took this to \$15.7 billion.

Most of this, around \$11.7 billion, is being funnelled to Egypt, Turkey and Jordan, the frontline states which suffered serious economic damage from the crisis.

New pledges Monday included \$500 million from Italy, \$200 million from Saudi Arabia, \$100 million from Japan, \$20 million

from South Korea, according to figures supplied by the group.

Although the U.S. chairs the group it has not contributed any aid because of its large military effort in the Gulf war.

Mulford said Germany had made a substantial contribution in recent days which was not included in the \$834 million, but gave no figure.

Germany had pledged \$1.33 billion in all, the group's figures showed.

Mulford said at least 60 per cent of the funds were grants. Aid covered balance of payments shortfalls, commodity imports, humanitarian and development projects, he added.

Over half the total promised, or \$8.33 billion, had already been distributed.

The meeting took place as

James Baker met Egyptian leaders as part of a 10-day Middle East tour promoting a four point plan which emphasises fostering the region's economic development.

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S. African government unveils laws to scrap land apartheid

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South African government Tuesday submitted draft legislation to parliament to scrap laws that have segregated housing and enforced land apartheid for nearly 80 years.

"The government has now decided... that race and population group should no longer be a qualification for the acquisition of land rights, that includes areas for specific races are, therefore, done away with," the government said in a statement.

But cabinet ministers said there would be no attempt to return land seized from blacks under apartheid and no law to forbid discrimination by private owners.

The legislation, scrapping almost 200 laws and more than 15,000 regulations, is almost certain to be approved by the parliament which is dominated by reformist President F.W. De Klerk's National Party.

"If someone in the private sector should decide that he does not want to let a property to a certain person on the basis of his race, he can do that," Planning and Provincial Affairs Minister Hennus Kriek said at a news conference.

The land reform plans were laid out in five draft laws and a

government policy paper submitted to the Cape Town parliament, which still excludes blacks, who outnumber whites five to one.

They include plans for the repeal of all restrictions on black home ownership in areas now reserved for whites as well as laws dating back to 1913 that have restricted black farmers to 13 per cent of the country's land.

The government proposed measures to protect established standards, but not white exclusivity, in white areas and to speed up the creation of new townships for the very poor.

Other clauses called for affirmative action to help blacks buy houses and get farm finance and training.

The measures comprised the first concrete action after De Klerk's Feb. 1 promise to parliament to repeal remaining apartheid laws.

"We are changing the whole picture. We hope that these bills will be on the statute books by the middle of the end of June this year," said Education Minister Stoffel Van Der Merwe.

Kriek said the government was removing laws enacted under apartheid to bypass established black civil rights.

Albania to re-establish ties with U.S.

VIENNA (R) — Communist Albania will re-establish diplomatic relations with the United States on March 15 after a break of more than 50 years. Albania's

official News Agency (ATA) said The agency said Foreign Minister Muhamet Kapllani would travel to Washington to sign a formal document.

Slovak nationalists rally for independence

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (R) — Tens of thousands of Slovak nationalists yelling "enough of Prague" have rallied for independence from the Czechs and an end to a united Czechoslovakia.

The Czech state government meanwhile announced it would begin searching for "alternative solutions" for the future, a day after President Vaclav Havel — a Czech — warned the federation could fall apart.

Demonstrators packed central Freedom Square in Slovakia's capital Bratislava for the second straight day, waving national flags and chanting "enough of Prague" "enough of Havel" and "independent Slovakia."

Estimates of the attendance ranged from 25,000 to 100,000. Neither police nor state media gave crowd figures.

Leading Slovak political groups, headed by increasingly

"Bylaws that differentiate on the basis of colour will not be permitted by law. Anybody, after the scrapping of the group areas act, will be able to buy land anywhere he wants to live."

But he said the government would not interfere in private contracts drawn up by property owners and added that people renting homes would not have the same protection as home-owners.

The paper ruled out one key black demand: "The government is totally opposed to any form of redistribution of agricultural land, whether by means of confiscation, nationalisation or expropriation."

Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the government's main negotiating partner in talks about a transition to democracy, had demanded reparations for blacks thrown off their land under apartheid.

"If radical land reform does not take place, we can expect an outburst of uncontrollable political anger," the ANC said in a memorandum last month.

Large parts of the government paper and draft bills deal with measures to help blacks acquire land. Kriek said two million plots held by blacks on leases of 25 to

99 years would automatically become theirs.

Restrictions on the creation of new towns and settlements would be eased to make way for large-scale emergency housing.

"Peace, progress and stability cannot be achieved unless every effort is made to ease the present housing shortage," the government said.

A minister last month estimated that more than two million blacks were homeless in South Africa. Private agencies put the figure much higher.

Kriek said more than a million hectares of farmland would be made available to blacks at subsidised prices and black farmers would for the first time be given access to all financial aid packages available to white farmers.

Meanwhile, an overnight curfew brought relative calm to Johannesburg's black townships, where at least 56 people have died in political faction fighting since Saturday, police said Tuesday.

A large army and police presence kept the peace between rival African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party supporters, a spokesman said.

No candidate appears to be the favourite, but African nations have made it clear the time has come for an African secretary-general following three from Europe, one from Asia and one from Latin America.

Perez de Cuellar, a Peruvian, says he agrees. The U.N. chief, who completes his second five-year stint at the end of 1991, has said he will not run again.

If Africans have been deprived of the top post so have women, who are rarely even among the nominations.

The woman's name mentioned most frequently as a candidate is Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, a pioneer in environmental affairs.

Added to this year's intrigue and gossip is a campaign by Sir Brian Urquhart, a former U.N. under-secretary-general now at the Ford Foundation, to reform the selection process and the U.N. Secretariat in general.

Urquhart and his colleague in the Ford Foundation research organisation, Erskine Childers, want members to draw up a list of qualifications, ask governments for nominations and allow the winner to have more say in appointing senior staff.

They want the term changed to one seven-year stint, rather than five years subjects to re-election, so that the secretary-general is less beholden to the five Security Council permanent members.

Deputy Prime Minister Lal said openly what many members of the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) have been saying in private — that the last thing they want to do at the moment is face India's 500 million voters, the world's biggest electorate.

"Let there be a division (vote) on the dissolution of the Lok Sabha also," said the 76-year-old peasant leader, to laughter and applause.

His comments, in the earthy Hindi of north India, came after the house had taken its unbroken vote in the past two days to clear urgent business.

"I'll expose everybody. When several members asked me why was I allowing the dissolution (of parliament) I told them, 'why don't you rebel against your leaders?'" he said.

More seriously, Lal said the elections would cost the country about 7.50 billion rupees (\$400 million) which taxpayers would have to find.

Many politicians privately admit they do not want early polls which they believe are unlikely to produce a clear winner.

They are also concerned an election campaign could stir up the caste and religious violence which has plagued India in the past year.

The only party apparently prepared for a poll is the fundamentalist Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, which significantly boosted its parliamentary standing in the last, inconclusive, polls in 1989.

Politicians expect President Ramaswamy Venkataraman to announce later Tuesday or Wednesday that he is dissolving parliament, meaning that an early general election will be held.

Solomon said that over the past day and a half he had had encouraging discussions on a number of issues of concern, including human rights, weapons proliferation, trade and cooperation on regional and international issues.

The Mitsubishi heavy spokesman said the metal fitting, designed to neutralise vibration in pipes carrying high-pressure water coolants, had not been welded in the correct position.

Mitsubishi apologised to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and to Kansai Electric for the accident Monday, the spokesman said.

As a result of the misplaced fitting, one pipe suffered from high-pitch vibration and succumbed to metal fatigue. In addition, a Kansai Electric mechanic had mistakenly closed a valve supposed to release excessive pressure in the primary cooling system.

The accident sparked a number of anti-nuclear rallies in many parts of the country.

Wrong installation causes Japanese nuclear accident

TOKYO (R) — Improper installation of metal fittings by a Japanese company was responsible for what may have been Japan's most serious nuclear power accident.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd, which made and installed the fittings, has apologised to the Japanese government and to the owner of the power plant where the Feb. 9 accident occurred, a company spokesman said Tuesday.

Mitsubishi built the power plant's generator and has won orders for 22 generators of the same type from five electricity companies in Japan, of which 16 have already started operation.

The radiation leak at the no. 2 Mihama Nuclear Power Plant, about 350 kilometres west of Tokyo, was well within accepted safety standards, but was serious enough to trigger the plant's emergency cooling system.

Government officials and offi-

cials at Kansai Electric Power Co., which operates the plant, said it was the most serious accident in the history of the Japanese nuclear power industry.

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Premier leads in 1st round of Benin presidential elections

COTONOU, Benin (AP) — Prime Minister Nicéphore Soglo led President Mathieu Kerekou in the first round of presidential voting, but the former Marxist dictator got enough votes to force a runoff, election officials said Tuesday.

Final unofficial results gave Soglo 36.87 per cent of the vote, compared with 26.01 per cent for Kerekou.

Labour leader Albert Tevoe-jre, a former U.N. International Labour Organisation chief, finished third with 14.11 per cent. Ten other candidates shared the rest of the votes.

Election officials said 1,162,515 of the country's 2,032,000 registered voters cast ballots.

Kerekou was forced to abandon his Marxist dictatorship a year ago when riots and strikes in support of multiparty democracy paralysed the government and the economy.

Political observers have predicted Kerekou will become the first president in Africa ousted in an election.

Union leaders have threatened a general strike if Kerekou won.

A similar strike a year ago paralysed this West African nation and forced Kerekou to hand over power to a caretaker government led by Soglo.

Opponents charged that Kerekou bought votes with money provided by governments in Togo, Ivory Coast and Morocco that didn't want to see him become the first president on the African continent to lose in an election.

Kerekou had threatened to intervene with his Presidential Guard if voting was marred by fraud or violence. But he also had been accused of trying to instigate violence, kick voters from the polls and create an excuse to hang onto power.

In addition to discussing Cambodia with Chinese officials, Solomon met on the issue with visiting Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev, French Ambassador Claude Martin and Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk, nominal head of the loose guerrilla coalition fighting the Vietnamese-supported government in Phnom Penh.

"We did indicate that we are quite concerned about a number of countries that may be sending missiles into this part of the world," he said.

"We indicated that we wanted to work closely with the Chinese to get the issue under control,

probably in a multilateral framework."

China used to be one of Iraq's major arms suppliers but Solomon said he believed that had stopped since Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait in August.

"The Chinese as a member of the U.N. have honoured the embargo," he said. "We have every reason to believe they have honoured that embargo..."

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